Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: JACK ANDERSON ARTICLE

1. FEBRUARY 22 WASHINGTON POST CARRIED LEAD ITEM IN
JACK ANDERSON COLUMN TITLED QUOTE REPORTS SHOW
SOVIETS ARMED EGYPT UNQUOTE. TEXT AS FOLLOWS:
QUOTE EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT ANWAR SADAT WILL NOW GET THE
U.S. WARPLANES HE SOUGHT DURING HIS RECENT WASHINGTON
VISIT. THERE ARE RUMBLINGS, IN FACT, THAT THE U.S. MIGHT
REPLACE THE SOVIET UNION AS EGYPT'S PRINCIPAL ARMS MERCHANT.

SADAT EXPLAINED DURING HIS WHIRLWIND STAY THAT THE SOVIETS
HAD CUT OFF ARMS SALES TO EGYPT AFTER THE YOM KIPPUR WAR
ENDED IN 1973. "THE SOVIET UNION PUT AN EMBARGO ON AND
REFUSED TO REPLACE ANY ARMS," HE STATED FLATLY. BECAUSE
OF THE SOVIET CUTOFF, HE KEPT PRESSING FOR GREATER MILI-
TARY AID FROM THE U.S.

SADAT'S CLAIM IS CONTRADICTED, HOWEVER, BY INTELLIGENCE
REPORTS, WHICH SHOW HE RECEIVED ENOUGH SOVIET MILITARY
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EQUIPMENT TO WAGE ANOTHER WAR. SOURCES WITH ACCESS TO
THE SECRET REPORTS TELL US THAT THE SOVIETS REPLACED MOST
OF THE ARMS LOST BY SADAT'S FORCES DURING THE ILL-FATED
WAR. THEY ALSO CONTINUED TO PROVIDE SOPHISTICATED NEW

WEAPONS.

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AS LATE AS 1975, EGYPT RECEIVED ABOUT $1.5 BILLION WORTH OF SOVIET ARMS AID, OUR SOURCES REPORT. RUSSIAN SPARE PARTS AND AMMUNITION ARRIVED ON A REGULAR BASIS. TANKS, ANTI-AIRCRAFT MISSILES AND OTHER MODERN WEAPONS ALSO REACHED EGYPT FROM SOVIET FACTORIES.

FROM SECRET INTELLIGENCE REPORTS, WE HAVE PIECED TOGETHER THE FOLLOWING DETAILS:

IN EARLY 1975, RUSSIA SENT SIX SUPERSONIC MIG "FLOGGER" FIGHTERS TO EGYPT ABOARD A SOVIET FREIGHTER. THE SOPHISTICATED JET FIGHTERS ARE DESIGNED TO STRIKE DEEP INTO ENEMY TERRITORY AND TO INTERCEPT ATTACKING PLANES.

IN LATE 1974, THE SOVIETS SENT SEVERAL SHIPMENTS OF SPARE PARTS AND AMMUNITION TO EGYPT. COMPETENT SOURCES SAY THESE SHIPMENTS WERE MADE ON A REGULAR BASIS.

THE KREMLIN HAS ALSO SENT THE FOLLOWING ARMS TO THE EGYPTIANS SINCE 1973: 50 REBUILT MIG ENGINES; APPROXIMATELY 30 MIG-23 COMBAT AIRCRAFT; 25 SUKHOI-20 COMBAT PLANES; 30 BATTERIES OF SAM-2, SAM-3 AND SAM-6 ANTI-AIRCRAFT MISSILES; 15 SCUD GROUND-TO-GROUND MISSILE LAUNCHERS; SIX FROG GROUND-TO-GROUND MISSILE LAUNCHERS; HUNDREDS OF TANKS; AND HUNDREDS OF ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS, ARTILLERY PIECES AND ANTI-AIRCRAFT CANNON. END QUOTE.
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2. DEPARTMENT USED FOLLOWING PRESS GUIDANCE IN RESPONDING TO RELEVANT QUESTIONS POSED AT NOON BRIEFING. QUOTE.IT HAS BEEN A WELL KNOWN FACT THAT THE EGYPTIAN ARMED FORCES FOR SOME TIME HAVE BEEN EQUIPPED PRINCIPALLY WITH ITEMS OF SOVIET MANUFACTURE. LIKEWISE, THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT HAS OPENLY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT A LIMITED SOVIET SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP EXISTED FOR SOME TIME FOLLOWING THE OCTOBER 1973 WAR. HOWEVER, TO THE BEST OF OUR INFORMATION, NO SIGNIFICANT SHIPMENTS OF SOVIET EQUIPMENT HAVE REACHED EGYPT SINCE ABOUT MID-1976. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE EMBARGO ON THE SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP WAS INITIATED BY THE SOVIET UNION. END QUOTE. VANCE

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